

**Cancer is the
number one cause
of death of
Americans under
age 85.**

Partners...

**A Newsletter for Partners and Providers of Early Detection Works,
Kansas Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening & Detection Program**

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Director's Message

This year is an exciting one for staff, providers and partners of the Early Detection Works (EDW) Program! For the first time, the program has limited funding to reimburse services to women under age 40. By now, providers should have received guidelines for services to younger women. If you have not received your copy, please go to www.kdhe.state.ks.us/edw and review the guidelines under "Patient Eligibility" in the medical professionals section.

To summarize, EDW will accept clients, age 40-63, who meet existing income eligibility guidelines and have no insurance or a high, unmet deductible. Women ages 35-39 must meet income guidelines and have no insurance. For women under age 40, EDW will provide a Pap test and a clinical breast exam. A mammogram or other screening service (ultrasound) will be provided only for women who have a close family history of breast cancer; are themselves a cancer survivor; or who have an abnormal result on a clinical breast exam.

Women under age 35 also may be eligible for EDW services – call the toll free number or your regional nurse for prior authorization. All women under age 40 must be uninsured and meet income guidelines (250 percent of federal poverty level). Uninsured women who are diagnosed with cancer through EDW are eligible for treatment through Medicaid, made possible by the "Treatment Act."

During the last few years, the EDW Program has hosted an annual conference for providers and partners. The April 2005 conference was co-sponsored by the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation to include breast cancer survivors. It was quite an exciting conference! EDW staff understand the commitment of providers to their own clinics and patients – and that it is often quite difficult to leave the practice for two days. To accommodate busy schedules, an annual conference will not be held in Spring 2006, and EDW staff will provide regional trainings instead. Each training session will include a clinical breast exam refresher, information about completing forms, discussion of issues regarding the program as a whole, individual case studies and a question and answer period.

Watch for the regional training to be offered in your area. Providers will be notified when locations, dates and times have been confirmed.

Preliminary estimates of services provided during our last grant year, July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2005, indicate that number of women served and services provided have again increased by at least 10 percent. EDW is currently serving approximately 18 percent of the eligible women in Kansas. Thanks to all providers, partners and friends of EDW for their enthusiasm in recruiting women for the program.

*Janet Neff, Director
Cancer Prevention and Control Program*

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Most insurance plans cover mammograms, but an estimated 30,000 women in Kansas between the ages of 40 and 64 are without health insurance, or have health insurance with high deductibles. For these women, having an annual mammogram isn't necessarily a routine event. Early Detection Works hopes to reach many of these women during October.

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, calling attention to the problem of breast cancer and to the importance of early detection. When diagnosed while in the earliest, localized stage, breast cancer patients have a survival rate of 98 percent. This is a significant increase from the 80 percent survival rate women experienced in the 1950s. This improved rate of survival is due to earlier detection of breast cancer as well as improved treatment. Given that one out of eight women will develop breast cancer at some time during her life, detection at an early, localized stage is a critical issue on both an individual and a public health level.

The American Cancer Society projects that nearly 2,000 Kansas women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005, more than any other cancer except skin cancer. About 380 Kansas women will die as a result of breast cancer in 2005.

The American Cancer Society recommends that women begin having annual mammograms at age 40. A mammogram, an x-ray of the breast, can detect breast cancer as small as a grain of salt, long before it can be felt. Some cancers, however, are not easily detectable by mammogram and an annual clinical breast exam performed by a nurse, physician or other health care professional also is recommended.

While it is recommended that screenings should begin at age 40, more than 80 percent of breast cancers occur in women age 50 and older, with the risk increasing with age. While women have one chance in eight of developing breast cancer over a lifetime, it is important to remember that the actual risk for any given year is much smaller than that.

The cause of breast cancer is not known although certain risk factors have been identified

- being a woman and increasing age are primary factors. Other factors include a personal history of cancer or breast disease, a family history of breast cancer, having had an early first menstrual period, having a first pregnancy after age 30, having no children, forgoing breast feeding, and taking post-menopausal hormone replacement therapy (HRT). The increased risk from HRT appears to last while women are actually on hormone therapy. The risk from a recent history of oral contraceptive use does not seem to continue over time. None of these risk factors mean that a woman will actually get cancer.

The National Cancer Institute has issued several lifestyle recommendations that may reduce the risk of breast cancer. These include staying active (for instance, taking a 30 minute walk on most days), maintaining a healthy body weight, limiting alcohol intake to one or fewer drinks per day, not smoking, and increasing fiber in the diet with whole grains, vegetables, and fruits. Fruits and vegetables also are recommended for their antioxidant and micronutrient value. Decreasing daily fat intake, especially saturated and hydrogenated fats, helps prevent such health problems as heart disease and stroke, and may also reduce the chance of developing cancers of the colon and breast.

Welcome Stephanie Thompson, RN, BSN Southeast Regional Nurse

Welcome to Stephanie Thompson, RN, BSN! Stephanie comes to Early Detection Works from a background in emergency room nursing. Since joining the program, Stephanie completed her BSN, cum laude, while working full-time, spending evenings doing her clinicals at the local hospital, and commuting 47 minutes each way to and from work. She plans to start work on her masters degree in January.

When Stephanie isn't working or studying, she stays busy with her husband and two boys, ages eight and six, or her favorite hobby - gardening.

We are very glad to have Stephanie on board!



Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan Introduced Across the State

A series of public meetings were held across Kansas the past four months to introduce the Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan to citizens, health care professionals and cancer survivors. A total of 16 meetings were held in nine locations from May through August with more than 100 participants.

“Meetings included a cross-section of the Kansas population and these individuals were given the opportunity to approach the problem of cancer in their own local community,” said Patrice O’Hara, cancer program manager in KDHE’s Office of Health Promotion. “By expressing their interests and concerns, attendees could work within their sphere of influence to approach their issues and concerns with cancer.”

Meetings were held in the cities of Shawnee and Olathe in the Kansas City area and in Topeka in May. In June, meetings were held in Salina, Parsons and Garden City. The meetings in August were held in Wichita, Hays and Colby.

Participants included cancer survivors and individuals representing agencies such as hospitals, health departments, community cancer centers, medical research foundations, hospices, oncology centers, community coalitions, radon programs, state agencies, cancer societies and institutes and tobacco free programs.

Results of the town hall meetings were presented to the 55 attendees at the bi-annual Kansas Cancer Partnership meeting held on September 9 in Topeka.

Note on Submission of Client Forms

Please submit client forms to your regional nurse as soon as services have been completed and recorded. Since this program is grant funded, it is imperative that services be reimbursed promptly, which can only be accomplished if providers submit forms monthly or as soon as service results have been recorded.

Early Detection Works staff sincerely appreciates your diligence in timely submission of client forms to ensure proper payment for eligible services. The July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005 grant year is closed. Bills for services provided during this time period will not be accepted.

Patient Advocacy in Health Care

In today’s medical arena, patients often find themselves at the doctor’s office hearing technical information that they don’t really understand. This may be especially true in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. After hearing the word, “cancer,” a patient may not hear anything else. How can health care providers help patients understand diagnostic tests and treatment options? It is important to find out what the patient is currently aware of and what needs clarification. Some patients may have already researched the possibilities on the Internet and are demanding the latest treatment options, but many others are left in a fog of fear and confusion.

A quick reference guide may be in order to remind patients of current treatment options. Simple written information about standard treatment options and explanations may be helpful. Frequently patients will need a little time to review the information, as they come to terms with the diagnosis. It is advisable for a patient to have a family member or friend with them when giving information about a serious diagnosis to improve the understanding of what is being said. In general, providers should do a better job of making sure that patients understand what is being said and what their options are.

In the future more patient navigator programs may be available to assist patients with problems that occur during the process of diagnosing and treating cancer. Some hospitals already have these services and patient navigators are helping patients by explaining tests and diagnoses and helping patients overcome barriers that present during treatment.

*Cindy Hasvold, RN, BSN
Public Health Nurse III*

A useful Web site for patient information and support is www.cancercare.org. There you can find fact sheets on different kinds of cancer, information on cancer treatment, online support groups for patients and family, and other resources pertinent to cancer patients. CancerCare is a nation-wide nonprofit organization. Call 1-800-813-HOPE (4673) to learn about services for breast cancer patients offered through CancerCare partnerships with Avon and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

Kansas Department of Health and Environment Offering Toll-free Tobacco Quitline

The Kansas Department of Health & Environment (KDHE) is contracting with the American Cancer Society to provide Kansans with a free resource to stop smoking. The 24-hour a day, toll-free Tobacco Quitline (**1-866-KAN-STOP**) offers a confidential and convenient way to access immediate help when they are ready to stop using tobacco or need support to remain tobacco-free.

Experienced cessation specialists answer the Quitline and work with the caller to conduct a personalized analysis of their tobacco use habit and then develop a customized Quit Plan to help them succeed in becoming tobacco free. The one-on-one telephone

counseling sessions are scheduled at times convenient for the caller and all services are free. The Kansas Tobacco Quitline is also designed to assist physicians and health care providers as they work with their patients.



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